



Experience Tradition, Embrace Innovation

Emerald's COVID Policy for Return of Students

When is Emerald re-opening for students?

We will be reopening for classes in our Palmerston Park centre on the 31/08/2020. This date is subject to government and Public Health guidelines and recommendations. The safety and wellbeing of our staff and students is our main priority and we have put the following steps and measures in place to manage the risk of infection and facilitate a safe return to the school and classroom.

Return to the School and use of Common Areas

Staff and students will be required to maintain the recommended social distance at all times.

Class and break times will be staggered to minimize contact on entry, exit, corridor, stairs and in common areas.

A one-way system will be clearly signed for entry and exit of students and staff. Only one class can use the stairs at any one time, while maintaining social distancing.

Floor markings will be used to ensure social distance in areas where queues will form or to maintain spacing in classrooms.

Cleaning of the school will be increased and in particular will focus on regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, desks, door handles and countertops.

Hand sanitizers will be provided around the school and signage will reinforce the importance of hand cleaning and coughing/ sneezing protocols. Staff and students will be required to sanitize their hands on arrival and to continue to sanitize at regular intervals throughout the day.

We require that students bring face coverings. These should be worn in class and in common areas throughout the school.

Weather permitting, you will be encouraged to take your break in our spacious garden, where social distancing rules will still apply.

Return to the Classroom

Level testing will be done prior to the arrival of the student. The written test will be done online and the speaking test will be done via zoom with a member of the Academic team.

Students will be assigned their own desk for the duration of their course.

Stations will be provided in each classroom including hand sanitizer and anti-bacterial cleaning products to allow students to clean their desk or chairs.

Classes will be assigned a room, which will not change. Rooms will be large enough to accommodate all students and their teacher while maintaining the recommended social distancing.

Classes will be assigned one teacher for their morning lessons. Classes will also be organised to minimise the number of students and staff you have contact with, creating class bubbles where possible. To facilitate this and in line with current Department of Education guidelines, all afternoon lessons will be delivered in virtual format.

All supplementary material, such as handouts, will be provided digitally on our Emerald learn platform.

Classrooms will be ventilated as much as possible.

Student Services and Welfare

Many of our Student Services are available on our website – students will be able to request letters, holidays, etc. However, one member of staff will be available to assist students at our reception. Students will be required to queue according to social distancing guidelines and there will be a maximum number of students allowed to queue at any one time.

Staff at reception and in the administration offices will be behind screens. Access to the administration and academic offices will be by appointment, which can be made on the website.

All of our staff will receive training prior to reopening with regard to the safe-guarding procedures.

Students will receive their orientation with a detailed presentation provided to students in advance of their arrival at the school.

Payment by cash for student services/materials will no longer be possible, payment is available by card or bank transfer.

Covid-19 Symptoms - guidelines

Students and staff will be required to complete an online form indicating that they have no Covid-19 symptoms on a regular basis.

All teachers, staff and students are asked to stay home if they are feeling unwell and are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms. Students can attend their lessons online if they are unwell so that they do not miss any of their course and everyone in their classroom and the school is kept safe.

You should also remain at home if you have been informed by the Covid Tracker App to self-isolate.

In case of symptoms, the steps are to:

- 1. Isolate**
- 2. Test**
- 3. Await results**
- 4. Trace**

You will then be required to self-isolate for up to 14 days (depending on when you came in contact with the person who tested positive). If you have been informed that you have been in close contact with someone that tested positive, members of your household do not need to self-isolate unless they have symptoms but all your family members do need to take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing and hand washing.

NOTE – If a member of your family has been asked to self-isolate due to being identified as a close contact person, please inform the school so that we can ensure everyone works to reduce any potential risk. Any person that is self isolating due to being identified as a ‘close contact’ must follow Step 1 if they develop any symptoms.

If someone presents with symptoms while at school, a separate room will be provided to isolate while on the premises.

Accommodation

We will only be providing single room accommodation, except for family members travelling together.

We are providing updated guidelines to our host families on how to keep themselves and students safe in their homes. All our families have been provided with all the relevant information regarding hand washing, cleaning and posters to be put up in the house in line with current HSE guidelines.

To reduce the chance of infection you will not be able to move to a different host until you have stayed at your current host for at least two weeks.

Social Programme

The Social Programme is an important part of every student's experience at the Emerald Cultural Institute and provides students with the opportunity to make new friends and explore different cultures whilst practising their English. While the restrictions continue, we will be modifying the social programme in line with recommendations. However, all students will still be able to participate in a range of fun and existing virtual activities together with some outdoor activities and events.

Airport Transfers

For students staying with a host family, as part of our safety measures students will be required to book a private airport transfer to your homestay. Students are requested not to take public transport from the airport.

We can only arrange single transfers unless you are travelling with family members or people you know.

Please be prepared to wear a mask or face covering in the taxi and to lift your own luggage into the back of the car. If you are unable to lift your own luggage the driver will do it for you but he/she may wipe your luggage with sanitising gel before handling it.

Self-isolation measures in the Republic of Ireland have been introduced and require anyone arriving into Ireland is required to restrict their movements for a period of 14 days, with certain exemptions. This policy is under review every few weeks. The up-to-date information is available here:

Travel Advice

Contact Tracing

For the purpose of contact tracing in the event of a case of Covid-19, it is strongly advised that all students download the Irish **Covid Tracker app**

The information contained in this document is subject to change in line with government guidelines and indications and may be updated accordingly.